

experiences and by interrupting the flow of the "interior monologue" with the free and untrammelled utterances of his comrades in distress, thereby achieving a new dimension and a broader perspective for what he saw and suffered himself. Thus, one could say that he develops creatively a workable tradition for which the groundwork was laid early in this century.

The history of this text—mainly Sinyavsky's communications to his wife—clarifies the lack of any discussion of the political and moral implications of his imprisonment. But the very absence of all such reflections puts the cruel absurdity of the author's incarceration into an even more somber and stark relief. There are no political reflections to detract the reader from the inner forces keeping Sinyavsky not only physically but also morally, spiritually, and psychologically alive: superior insight, a transcendent sense of beauty in nature as well as in art, and the conviction of an ultimate meaning of existence (his own dire fate included), which is distilled from religious illumination and a mystical awareness of the basic unity of all created and divinely ordained things. These constitutive elements of the spiritual training by means of which the author morally overcomes the horrors of his situation link him, of course, with Dostoevsky (on page 324 the reader finds a reference to the celebrated *House of the Dead*). And even if Sinyavsky with some ironic resignation states that the living, alas, are bored by the "dead," even if they are "dead" only temporarily, this reviewer certainly was not bored for one minute when listening to "the voice from the chorus." The volume is a remarkable testimony to what goes on in large parts of the globe in this century, all enlightened, progressive, and humanitarian posturings notwithstanding. It imparts many things to the reader, particularly a sense of humility and a deep skepticism with regard to all purely man-made attempts at self-redemption.

Max Hayward's sensitive introduction furnishes an adequate background for the reader who is unfamiliar with Soviet Russian conditions. His explanations of little-known Russian terms, turns of speech, and specific realia of Soviet Russian life in its less publicized, largely unexplored aspects prove to be a useful aid to the Western reader. The English version, on the whole, reads well. Rarely does the reader feel that he is dealing with a translation from a foreign idiom, even though here and there one could have wished for a little more color.

HEINRICH A. STAMMLER
University of Kansas

HERE'S TO YOUR HEALTH, COMRADE SHIFRIN! By *Ilya Suslov*. Translated by *Maxine Bronstein*. Foreword by *Maurice Friedberg*. Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1977. xviii, 204 pp. \$8.95.

Here's To Your Health, Comrade Shifrin! produces a strong sense of *déjà lu*. We have read it all before: some of it in Gogol, some of it in Il'f and Petrov or Zoshchenko, some of it in Voinovich or even Pliushch. Maurice Friedberg's foreword accurately and sympathetically places this book where it belongs in a long and honorable Russian and Russian Jewish satirical tradition.

The techniques of satire being what they are, and Russian life being what it is (or what it seems to be), it is probably inevitable that the major pleasure provided by this book is the pleasure of recognition. But discovery is also an important element in comedy, and it is, I think, fair to say that *Here's To Your Health, Comrade Shifrin!* does not advance the satiric tradition in any direction—not even by the eminently unpredictable knight's move, so justly a favorite of satirists. *Here's To Your Health* is therefore not in the same league with such complex creations of the literary imagination as *The Master and Margarita* or even *The Trial Begins*, and certainly cannot bear comparison with Alexander Zinov'ev's extraordinary *Gaping Heights* (*Ziiaishchie vysoty*).

Yet this is not to say that *Here's To Your Health, Comrade Shifrin!* is an unimportant book. It should not be dismissed as merely another example of Jewish survival humor. To do so would be to violate the important principle, so passionately argued by Solzhenitsyn, that the experiences and fates of individuals must not be reduced to statistics. Even if Suslov's book is not a major literary event, it is still the personal statement of a man with a good mind, a good face, a sharp ear for cant, and a fine sense of irony. He tells us the saga of Tolia Shifrin's struggle to survive in the system with unflinching humor. He deserves to be read, and *Here's To Your Health, Comrade Shifrin!* will certainly find a place on the rapidly lengthening shelf of books by interesting people who had to emigrate before their true voices could be heard.

ELIZABETH KLOSTY BEAUJOUR
Hunter College, CUNY

GESAMMELTE SLAVISTISCHE UND BALKANOLOGISCHE ABHANDLUNGEN, part 2. By Alois Schmaus. Edited by Peter Rehder. Beiträge zur Kenntnis Südosteuropas und des Nahen Orients, vol. 14, part 2. Munich: Dr. Dr. Rudolf Trofenik, 1973. 478 pp.

Peter Rehder has done what Alois Schmaus reputedly wanted to do himself had he lived longer; namely, he has codified and reprinted all the scattered learned writings of less than book-length which Schmaus produced in more than forty-five years of distinguished activity as Slavist and Balkanologist. This, the second book in a four-volume set, reprints all the scholarly essays and articles written in German (excluding book reviews and occasional lectures) which Schmaus published during the last decade of his life, 1960–70. Also included in the volume are two previously unpublished pieces—from 1948 and 1961 respectively—one on the rise of the modern Bulgarian literary language, and the other on the influence of Russian literature in the formation of modern South Slavic literatures. Schmaus's earlier writings in German (1931–60) and a bibliography of all his published works are contained in volume 1 of the set; on pages 5 and 6 of volume 2, Rehder adds another dozen printed items and eight unpublished lectures found in typescript among Schmaus's papers, none of which have been reprinted in these volumes, however. Totally fluent (and even somewhat a rhetorician) in Serbian, Schmaus wrote and published in that language for six years before his first publication in his native German. The Serbian writings comprise volume 3 (for the years 1927–38) and volume 4 (1938–70) in the present edition.

The thirty-three German essays in volume 2 accurately reflect the great erudition and breadth of their noted author, who was both a connoisseur and a uniquely accomplished savant of Balkan cultural life. Twelve of the essays deal with oral epos, his favorite subject, and range from metrical and stylistic considerations to the more abstract critical topics of epic heroism and myth. The Albanian epic tradition (which he knew in the original language) and legends of Skenderbeg were much on Schmaus's mind in the 1960s, as was the thematic community of oral epic traditions in all the languages and dialects of the Balkans. It was typical of Schmaus that his mind moved constantly and with perfect grace over just such extended gamuts of unusual, specialized knowledge and original appreciation of the larger implications of that knowledge.

In addition to the articles on the epic, Schmaus published five further essays on various motifs of popular balladry, as well as an additional series of six articles on assorted literary subjects, during his final decade. The latter included pieces on Pushkin's "Pamiatnik," on Dositej Obradović's *Autobiography* and Domentijan's *Life of Sava*, on Taras Ševčenko, on Borisav Stanković's novels, and on a poem of religious (baptismal) import by F. Prešeren. To a casual observer, these diverse topics might seem unrelated either among themselves or to Schmaus's other work during the same